



Minimum Requirements for Spot Cats to Print Your Project and Common Pitfalls

Size & Bleed: If your design is intended to have a white border around it, be sure to leave enough room around your design to account for that white border. If your design is intended to extend past trim (aka bleed,) be sure the color extends all the way to the edge of the canvas, and that you leave no critical content too close to the edge, else it risks being cut off. e.g. here's how to set up a 1" x 1" red sticker two ways:

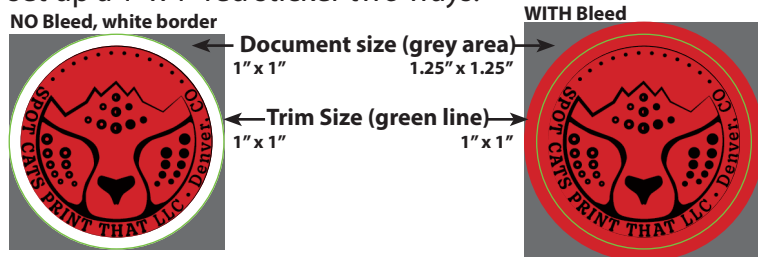
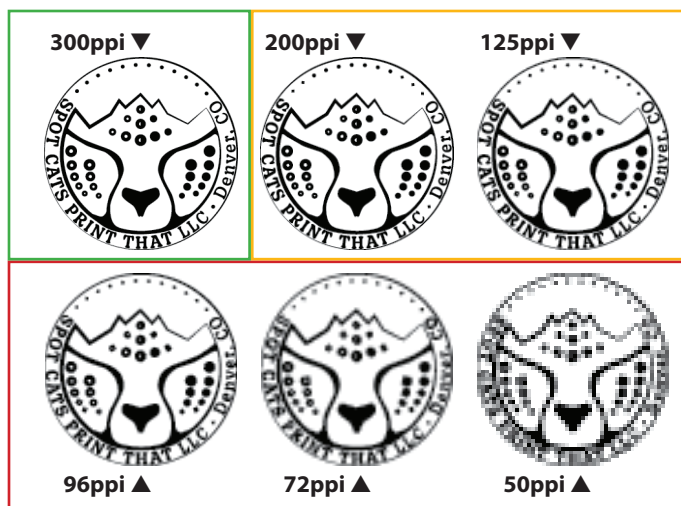


Image Resolution: We recommend that you output files at 300ppi resolution at your final size. Lower than this, and your image quality will degrade exponentially. It starts to be noticeable at about 200ppi, and VERY noticeable at about 125ppi. We will put your job on hold if you submit low-res files.

1" x 1" file at various resolutions:



Jobs with raster files that have an resolution quality over 300ppi are ideal. Resolutions over 600ppi are overkill, but will not hurt anything.

Jobs with raster files that have a resolution quality between 299 and 126ppi may be placed on hold to reiterate quality issues, but will not prevent the job from going to production.

We will refuse jobs with raster files that have an image resolution quality under 125ppi. (Banners are an exception, as they are meant to be viewed from a distance.)

Crop Marks: We do NOT require crop marks or any other default printer marks.

Spot Colors: All spot colors will be converted to CMYK during final output. The only spot colors that do not get converted are those which our printer uses to cut lines (CutCountour), and when there is a white underlay for clear or holographic stickers (RDG_WHITE). You can set those up if you like, but keep in mind that they are case-sensitive.

Fonts: Some fonts are incapable of being embedded due to licensing restrictions, especially fonts coming from free websites like dafont. It is recommended if you are using any non-standard font, that you please outline them prior to output. Otherwise, your job may either be put on hold, or the final product may not print as intended.

Colorspace: It's worth noting that all files will be converted to CMYK on our end, regardless of colorspace. Just be aware that there is often a more dramatic color shift if you submit files that are in RGB.

Preflight: We will do a preflight on our end to check for some very common problems prior to outputting the final products.

Rich Black: We use an eco-solvent ink that is fairly vibrant, so rich black is not necessary. If you do want a slightly richer look, the CMYK build we would suggest is 40, 30, 30, 100.

Registration Black: In Illustrator and InDesign, there is a swatch called "Registration Black" that should NEVER be used under any circumstances. What it does is output 100% of all colors, which cakes on ink. This not only increases drying times, but it may cause your final product to smudge.

Native Files: While submitting native files (.ai, .psd, .indd, .svg, .eps, etc.) may seem like it would be the most ideal, it often isn't because there may be issues with compatibility or file conversion. We just use those programs to output PDFs on our end. Thus, having you output print-ready PDFs is the best practice. See the next page for instructions on outputting print-ready PDFs.

Please note that the proceeding settings are just ones that work for us. Other printers you work with will likely use different settings!

In Illustrator: File --> Save As --> Adobe PDF (pdf) -->

GENERAL TAB

Standard: Set to None

Compatibility: Set to Acrobat 5 (PDF 1.4)

Check: Preserve Illustrator Editing Capabilities

Everything else should be unchecked.

COMPRESSION TAB

Color Bitmap Images:

Do Not Downsample

Compression: Automatic (JPEG)

Image Quality: Maximum

Grayscale Bitmap Images should match above settings.

Monochrome Images

Do Not Downsample

Compression: Zip

Check: Compress Text and Line Art

MARKS AND BLEEDS TAB

All Printers Marks should be UNchecked.

• With all marks unchecked, the values for Printer Mark Type, Trim Mark Weight, and Offset do not matter.

Use Document Bleed Settings should be UNchecked and the values should be set to 0

OUTPUT TAB

Color Conversion: Convert to Destination

Don't Include Profiles

ADVANCED TAB

Subset Fonts to 100%

In the top-right corner click the  button to save the preset. You only need to do this the first time. Then, you can select the preset button at the top of the dialog box.

Click Save PDF, and save it somewhere on your computer.

